Participating countries in PIRLS 2011

Ireland Indonesia South America Italy Iran, Islamic Rep. of Canada Lithuania Israel Colombia Luxembourg Kuwait Honduras Malta Mongolia Trinidad and Tobago Netherlands Oman United States Norway Oatar Poland Saudi Arabia Europe Romania Singapore Austria Russian Federation United Arab Belgium (French) Scotland Emirates Bosnia and Slovak Republic Herzegovina Africa Slovenia Bulgaria Botswana Spain Croatia Egypt Sweden Czech Republic Libya

> Chinese Taipei Hong Kong SAR

Benchmarking participants

Ukraine

Asia and

Armenia

Azerbaijan

Middle East

Abu Dhabi, UAE Dubai, UAE Alberta, Canada Ontario, Canada

Denmark

England

Finland

France

Georgia

Germany

Hungary

Oubai, UAE Quebec, Canada

Morocco

Australia

Australia

South Africa

and Oceania

New Zealand

PIRLS assesses reading for literary experience and for acquiring and using information. PIRLS asks students to engage in a full repertoire of reading skills and strategies, including:

- Focusing on and retrieving explicitly stated information;
- Making straightforward inferences;
- Interpreting and integrating ideas and information; and
- Examining or evaluating content, language, and textual elements.

NCES is authorized to conduct PIRLS under Section 153, of Public Law 107-279. Information collected will help the U.S. Department of Education's ongoing efforts to benchmark student achievement in the United States. Participation is voluntary. Data collected may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose (Title V, subtitle A of the E-Government Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-347) and Section 183, Public Law 107-279). The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0645. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.



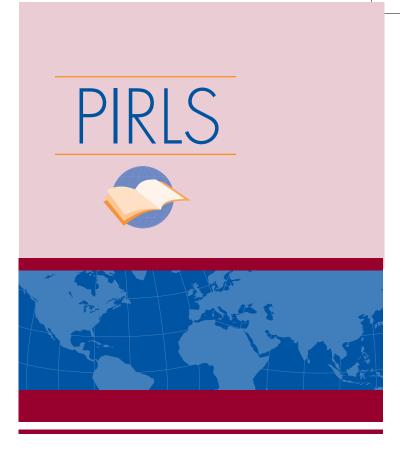
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For questions about PIRLS 2011, contact the PIRLS Information Hotline at 1-888-369-5033 or email TIMSS-PIRLS@westat.com



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Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2011



What is PIRLS?

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is an international assessment and research project designed to measure both trends in fourth-grade students' reading literacy achievement as well as school and teacher practices related to reading instruction. PIRLS 2011 is the third such study in the PIRLS series of internationally comparative reading studies carried out in countries around the world every 5 years. In PIRLS 2011, students from more than 50 countries, including the United States, will participate.

PIRLS is sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and managed in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education.

Why is PIRLS important?

PIRLS provides a unique opportunity to compare the reading knowledge and skills of U.S. fourth-graders with their peers in countries around the world. PIRLS complements what we learn from national assessments by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of students in reading relative to students around the world. The results inform national discussions about U.S. education performance and practice within the wider context of international competitiveness.

Moreover, by participating in PIRLS 2011, the United States will obtain data about changes in children's



reading achievement over the past 10 years, including valuable information about changes in reading instruction, how those changes relate to students' performance in reading, and about home, school, and classroom influences on reading achievement.

What type of reading assessment is PIRLS?

PIRLS is designed to reflect the reading curriculum used in participating countries. PIRLS asks students to read two texts, either two literary texts (narrative fiction, generally drawn from children's books), two informational texts (typically excerpts from biographies, step-by-step instructions, or scientific or non-fictional materials), or one of each type. It then asks students about a dozen questions both multiple-choice and open-ended "constructed response" questions—about the texts. These questions may range from identifying the place, time, and actions of the main characters or events to interpreting how characters might feel, why events occurred, or what the passage means overall (e.g., does the story teach a lesson?). Examples of released PIRLS test items can be viewed at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008017_2.pdf.

Key findings from PIRLS 2006

- In PIRLS 2006, the average U.S. 4th-grader's reading literacy score (540)
 was above the PIRLS scale average
 of 500 but below that of 4th-graders
 in 7 of the other 39 participating
 countries and 3 of the 5 participating
 Canadian provinces.
- Among the 28 countries that participated in both the 2001 and 2006 PIRLS assessments, the average reading literacy score increased in 8 countries and decreased in 6 countries. In the rest of the countries, including the United States, there was no measurable change in the average reading literacy score.

PIRLS is also meant to study home and school factors associated with children's reading literacy by the fourth grade. To that end, PIRLS will also administer questionnaires to students, their teachers, and the principals of their schools. The questions are designed to measure key aspects of students' home and school environments. In this way, PIRLS provides each country with a rich source of information on the factors influencing reading literacy.